

Message Text

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42

ACTION NEA-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0230

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TAGS: PFOR, EG, BG

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH PRIME MINISTER VISITS EGYPT

1. PRIME MINISTER SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN VISITED EGYPT NOV 5-10. HE WAS MET AT AIRPORT BY VICEPRES HUSSEIN AL SHAFEI. PRES SADAT WAS ILL DURING VISIT, BUT MUJIB CALLED ON HIM AT HIS HOME FOR A 1/2 HR CONVERSATION ON DAY OF ARRIVAL.
2. ON EVENING OF NOV 5 PRES SADAT GAVE A DINNER FOR MUJIB, BUT AGAIN DID NOT ATTEND DUE TO ILLNESS. VICEPRES SHAFEI IN HIS TOAST PLEDGED SUPPORT TO BANGLADESH'S EFFORTS TOWARD PEACE AND RECONSTRUCTION. MUJIB RESPONDED BY DECLARING SUPPORT OF 75 MILLION CITIZENS OF BANGLADESH FOR ARAB STRUGGLE AGAINST ZIONIST AGGRESSION AND FOR NATIONAL RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE.
3. ON NOV 6 MUJIB TOURED SUEZ CANAL AREA AND BAR LEV LINE. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS SAMIH ANWAR AND CHIEF OF STAFF LTG GAMASI. MUJIB ON THIS OCCASION REPORTEDLY COMMENTED THAT VICTORIES OF ARAB ARMIES IN OCT WAR HAD REVIVED ISLAMIC PEOPLES'S FIGHTING SPIRIT. LATER, ON EVENING OF NOV 6 MUJIB GAVE WORKING DINNER IN HONOR OF

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PRIMIN HEGAZI, MIN PLANNING ABDALLAH, MINTRADE MATBOULI AND

MINSTATE FOR FONAFF ANWAR WERE IN ATTENDANCE.

4. MUJIB WAS ALSO ILL FOR PART OF THE VISIT. A DAY WAS SPENT IN VISITS TO LUXOR AND ASWAN.

5. PRIOR TO DEPARTURE MUJIB MET A SECOND TIME WITH PRES SADAT AT THE LATTER'S HOME. IN TALKS WITH EGYPTIANS, AN AGREEMENT WAS REPORTEDLY SIGNED BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES IN FIELDS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE. JOINT COMMUNIQUE, TEXT OF WHICH APPEARED IN ONLY ONE ARABIC NEWSPAPER (AL AKHBAR) INCLUDED CALL FOR A JUST ME SETTLEMENT AND STATEMENT THIS COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT LIBERATION OF ALL ARAB TERRITORIES OCCUPIED SINCE 1967, INCLUDING JERUSALEM. COMMUNIQUE ALSO INDICATED BOTH COUNTRIES AGREED FORM JOINT COMMITTEE TO PROMOTE COOPERATION BETWEEN TWO STATES. COMMITTEE WOULD BE HEADED BY RESPECTIVE FONMINS. COMMUNIQUE FURTHER CALLED FOR FINDING URGENT SOLUTION TO CYPRUS PROBLEM BASED ON RESPECT FOR ISLAND'S INDEPENDENCE, TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY AND SAFEGUARDING LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF GREEK AND TURKISH COMMUNITIES.

6. AT AIRPORT PRESS CONFERENCE BEFORE DEPARTURE MUJIB DECLARED BANGLADESH'S SUPPORT FOR EGYPT AND ARAB COUNTRIES IN RECOVERING THEIR TERRITORIES. HE CALLED FOR IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAEL AND STATED BANGLADESH WOULD NOT RECOGNIZE ISRAEL.

7. COMMENT: EGYPTIANS FEEL MUJIB VISIT WENT RELATIVELY WELL. THEY WERE PLEASED ABOUT STRONG STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT FOR ARAB CAUSE. MUJIB'S ARRIVAL AND INITIAL PERIOD IN CAIRO WERE OVERSHADOWED BY VISIT OF SEC KISSINGER. LATTER PART OF VISIT, HOWEVER, AND PARTICULARLY DEPARTURE STATEMENTS, RECEIVED PROMINENT FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE IN CAIRO NEWSPAPERS.
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